

K-195  
Thornton  
Chestertown  
Private

1780

Thornton is a fine late 18th century plantation house of brick. The main house is five bays wide with two rooms per floor and a central hall. The kitchen wing also brick is covered with a catslide roof. The house retains an unusual amount of original trim and detailing, including a fine later porch. The interior is a treasure of original woodwork and painted graining. This decoration is now valuable and rare; having passed from favor in the 20th century, much of it was painted over and damaged. It has survived at Thornton, however, and in almost perfect condition. The house was built by the Brooks family, by whom it is still owned.

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Thornton

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Perkins Hill Road

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown

☒ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Kent

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

☐ YES RESTRICTED☐ YES UNRESTRICTED☒ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

P. M. Brooks

Telephone #:(301) 778-0595

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Front Street

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown

☐ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21620

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Kent County Courthouse

Liber #: RAS 30

Folio #: 545

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown

STATE

Maryland 21620

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

K-195

## 7 DESCRIPTION

### CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT

☐ GOOD

☒ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED

☐ RUINS

☐ UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

☒ UNALTERED

☐ ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE

☐ MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Thornton is a brick house and wing built in the late 18th century. It is located on Perkins Hill Road near Urieville and faces north across open fields. The main house is five bays wide and two and one-half stories high standing on a tall basement which is marked with a molded water table. The gable roof of the main house has two gable dormers in each roof slope. The chimneys are enclosed in gable walls and have corbelled and banded brick caps.

The wing is one and one-half stories high, one room deep and four bays long. It has a catslide gable roof extending above a shallow front veranda which is as long as the wing. The veranda roof rests upon four brick columns with bases marked by a course of molded bricks identical to those which make up the water table of the main house. The long slope of the roof is toward the rear of the building. Both slopes have gable dormers. A chimney is enclosed in the west gable wall. Another protrudes from the center of the wing. Both have corbelled caps; the central chimney is extremely tall and slender.

The brick of the main house is laid in Flemish bond on the north (approach) facade, Liverpool bond on gables and rear, and English bond below the water table (which is found on the front, rear facades and on the east gable.)

Flemish bond mortar joints are grapevined. A belt course on the front facade has been chiseled away. Window openings on both front and rear have splayed flat arches; those in the attic have rowlock arches. The wing has Liverpool bond on all facades.

The main house is evenly fenestrated with 3/8 sash windows on the second floor, 12/8 sash windows on the first and three-pane windows used for cellar windows. There are central entrances, a 8/8 window at the stair landing, rear, and a tall window, now closed with louvered blinds above the main entrance. Second floor and basement windows have beaded frames with quarterround backband moldings; first floor frames on the south facade have quarterround moldings but are not beaded. On the north first floor and on the south entrance, frames have two planes instead of being flat, are beaded and have the usual quarterround backband. Sills on the second floor are flush with the walls, but those on the first are rounded and have a cove bed. (This detail is also seen at Knocks Folly, K-114) Louvered shutters are seen on second floor windows; on the first are three raised and beveled panel blinds which may be original.

Front and rear entrance doors have six raised and beveled panels on the outside; inside they have unusual horizontal battens which are beaded and grained and closed with late 19th century hardware. The north front entrance has a five pane transom light. It has architrave trim with triglyph corner blocks and paneled pilasters. There are full length louvered shutters. The jambs have flush beaded panels. The front entrance porch appears to be somewhat later than the house; its flat hipped roof is supported by double round columns. The balustrade has plain rectangular balusters and a molded handrail. The cornice has delicate, shaped modillion blocks. There are two benches. Steps and rear porch are missing.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

K-195

ERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		Interior design

SPECIFIC DATES c 1780

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Brooks Family

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Thornton retains an unusual amount of original trim and detailing on the exterior, but the interior is a treasure of early woodwork and decoration. Virtually all major features remain in place and most are decorated with painted graining. This decoration is extremely valuable and rare; having passed from favor in the 20th century, much of it was painted over and damaged. It has survived at Thornton, however, and in almost-perfect condition. The date of the graining is impossible to determine without paint analysis by an expert, however, the molding profiles are very sharp and in a damaged door in the parlor chamber only one color of paint, a bright, light blue, was visible, both of which would indicate that this was an early treatment, probably before 1850.

Thornton represents a fine country house of the end of the 18th century. Records in the Kent County Courthouse have a transaction of March 17, 1809 transferring the property (900 acres) from Mary Brooks to Phillip Brooks. A note gives the property its present name and stated that it previously belonged to another Phillip Brooks "late of Kent County." (B.C. 5/432) Whether the first Phillip was the builder of the house is unknown; the house has remained in the family until the present.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

K-195

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Earle, Swepson, The Chesapeake Bay Country, New York, Weathervane Books, repeat, originally published by the author, 1923.

Deed and Land Records, Kent County Court House, Chestertown, Maryland.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Marsha L. Fritz, Consultant

ORGANIZATION

Kent County Historical Society

DATE

August, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

Church Alley

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Chestertown

STATE

Maryland 21620

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

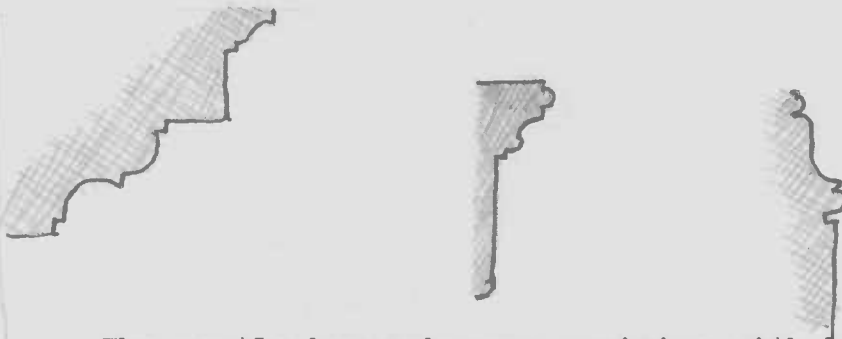
## # 7 Continued

Six sash windows are used on the wing which is also evenly fenestrated. Entrance doors are located in the east bay on front and rear and in the third bay from the east on the rear. Like the windows, frames have backband moldings made up of delicate composite curves. An additional entrance has been added to the gable. A portion of original cornice, made up of cyma recta and quarterround, remains on the rear.

The main house has a central hall and two rooms per floor. There are rooms on each floor of the wing and an enclosed stair. Most of the original woodwork remains in the house with the exception of the kitchen. Floors of medium to wide yellow pine also remain; most have not been painted, varnished or stained. Plaster, most in good condition and some fragments of wall paper, have also survived.

The stair is of the three run type and is open to the attic. The newel is very simple and turned as are intermediates. The newel cap is continuous with an oval, molded handrail. Balusters are rectangular, two per step. Step brackets have a scroll design up to the second floor and a curved slot above that. The spandrel is a simple rectangular panel with painted maple burl graining.

In the main, east parlor, the fireplace has a tabernacle overmantle. The mantle opening is rectangular with quarterround crossette surround. The straight mantle shelf has a curved bracket support. The room has crossette trim on the four windows and the door. Cornice, chairrail are sketched (not to scale) below.



The mantle has mahogany graining with black picking-out on ogee edge of panels. Panel fields are oak burl. Six-panel doors have oak graining with burl panels.

The west first floor room has identical chairrail and baseboard, and trim except without crossettes. The paneled fireplace wall has recessed panels with ogee edges. There is a closet beside the fireplace.

The parlor chamber has a mantle with shelf supported by brackets and two flanking closets with six-panel doors. Paneling on this wall is recessed; the same chairrail as above is used but the window trim is a single quarterround. The west room on the second floor has a very similar paneled fireplace wall but the mantle shelf is supported by consoles.

# 7 Continued

Page 2

The first floor wing room has a more delicate trim made up of composite moldings and a mantle with broken shelf and three reeded freize blocks; there is a closet with vertical boards on the closet.

The main house appears to have been the first part constructed with wing added soon after.

Thornton is very similar to the house on the adjoining farm (K - 196). This house retains a great amount of its original frames, sash, shutters and interior woodwork and is a mine of 18th century detail. It even has its brick gutters on each side of the house to carry the water away from the foundations.

It is a five bay long,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  story house, with a four bay long,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  story wing. Basement brick is laid in English bond and there are four windows on both sides which retain original frames and sash set behind iron bars which are constructed into the masonry walls. There are flat arches above all windows. A quarter round molded brick forms the water table which encircles the house. There is no belt course. The center entrance has paneled jamb and door, transom and fluted pilasters and a good porch of the same period as the pilasters, a little later than the original house. There is also an entrance door on the second floor, leading onto the roof of the portico or porch. This latter door was probably a window originally. The windows have 12/12 sash on the first story 12/8 on second story and 6/6 in the "A" roof dormers, all of which appear original. There are original paneled shutters on the first story and louvered shutters on the second story. Within each gable is a very large chimney with good bold cap.

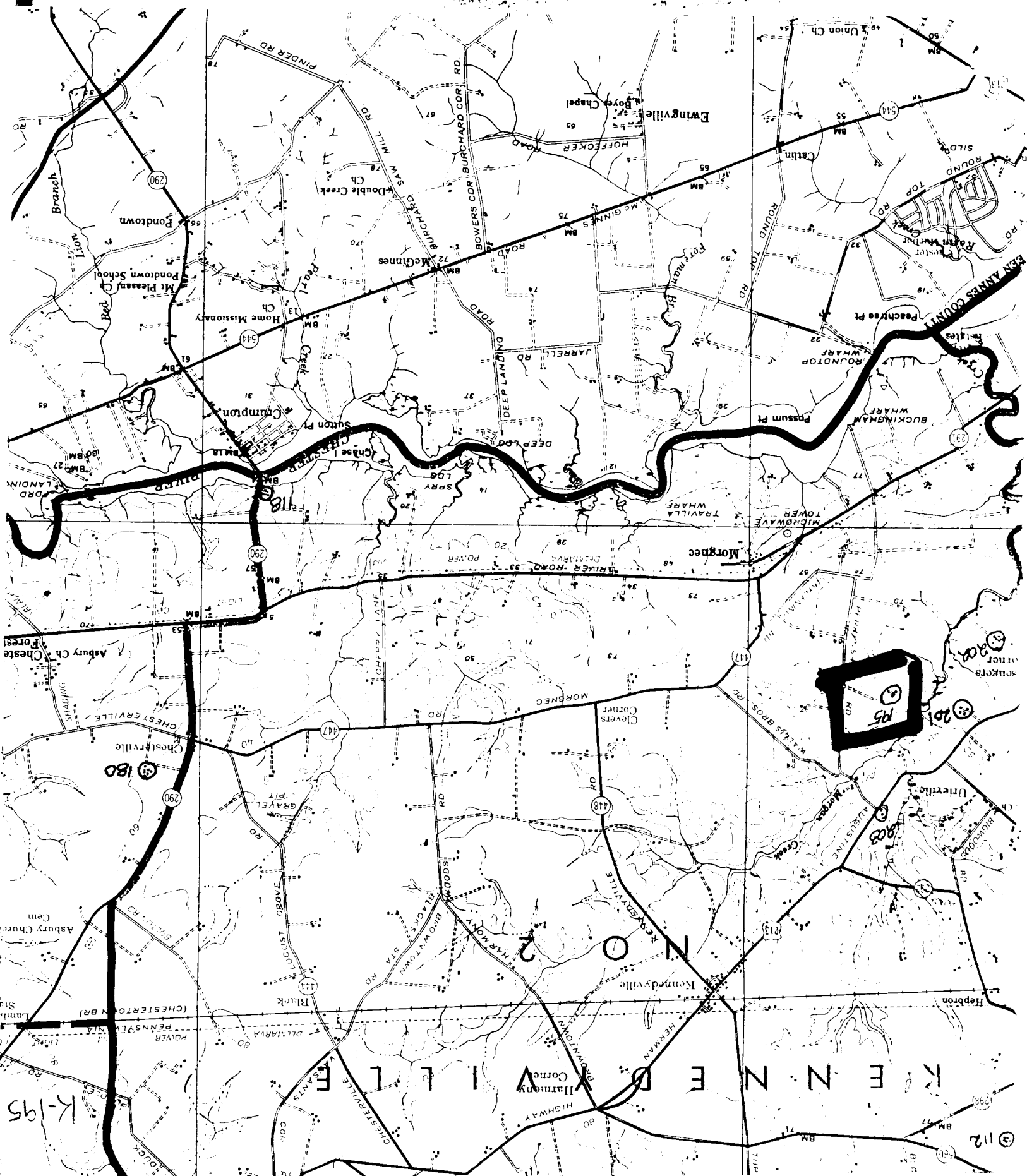
The brick wing is a very unusual treatment for a kitchen in Kent County. It is four bays long with three dormers on each side of the roof, neither side being symmetrical. The north side has a porch or arcade with brick floor laid on the ground, brick piers with quarter round watertable, <sup>and</sup> ~~which~~ is flush with the main facade, thus setting the opposite side of the building about six feet forward of the south wall of the main portion. The roof is very steep on the south facade and is catslide on the north, in order to cover the arcade. The entrance to the basement of the main portion is under the cover of the arcade. The ceiling of the arcade has beaded slats with an air space between. Windows of the wing have 9/6 sash. There is a chimney on the outer gable and one in the middle of the structure which is very tall. A recent leanto porch has been installed on the south side.

The interior is almost all original but is in untouched condition. The parlor has window seats, broken pediment above the fireplace, dog ear trim, etc.

Over

The stair has a mahogany rail, turned newel and square balusters and ascends to the attic. Other rooms are simpler, but worthy of study. The wing contains the kitchen and presumably a dining room, with enclosed stair between.

This is one of the few houses in Kent which is in almost untouched condition.





THORNTON MHT 195

PERKINS HILL RD  
CHESTERTOWN, MD

FRONT - NORTH WEST

C. ENGSTROM AUG. 1977



THORNTON

MHT 195

PERKINS HILL RD

CHESTERTOWN, MD.

HIGHER SECTION - STAIRWAY

C. ENGSTROM AUG 1977



Tharnton

M.H.T. 195

Perkins Hill Rd.

Chesterbrook, Md.

First Floor - Fall Section - Grained  
door at entrance to South Room

C. Engstrom

Aug 1977



THORNTON MHT 195

PERKINS HILL RD

CHESTERTOWN, MD

MANTEL-PANELLING-SECOND FLOOR-HIGHER SECTION

C. ENGSTROM

AUG 1977